

Meeting: Adult Social Care and Public Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

Date: 27/10/22

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Suicide Prevention in Torbay

When does the decision need to be implemented? For information – no decision required

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report will update on local suicide prevention activity in Torbay as outlined in the Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Action Plan 2022/23 (Appendix 1) and provide information on how the council is working with partners to reduce the high number of suicides in Torbay. The Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Action Plan is owned and monitored via the Torbay Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance (statutory and CVSE membership), with a multi-agency sub-group formed to identify priorities for the year and to co-produce and monitor interventions in line with priorities. The annual plan is endorsed by the Torbay Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.2 There is no acceptable number of suicides in Torbay – the aim should be an aspiration of zero suicides, but plans must be realistic to the context within which they sit. Last year's plan (2021-22), aimed for no increase in Torbay's suicide rate from 19.0 per 100,000 over the course of the year. We are pleased to report that this was achieved with our current rate of 18.8 per 100,000. However, we are not complacent, as our rate is still significantly higher than most areas in the country and this is combined with an economic position that currently challenges the most vulnerable individuals in our society. Evidence suggests that suicide rates are likely to increase in most countries post pandemic and during times of financial crisis.
- 1.3 In this year's plan (2022/23), new priorities include:
 - i) Supporting research and data collection;
 - ii) Tackling basic needs first;

- iii) Tailoring approaches to improve mental health in children and young people; and
- iv) Providing Devon-wide online mental health and wellbeing support for adults.

1.4 Torbay Council specific recommendations are outlined in Section 3.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1 To update on local suicide prevention activity in Torbay as outlined in the Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Action Plan 2022/23 and provide information on how the council is working to reduce the high number of suicides in Torbay.

The priorities within this plan are intended to help residents thrive and – particularly this year – help tackle poverty, deprivation and vulnerability given our national economic climate.

2.2 The recommendations contain tangible activities where the council can further contribute to suicide prevention activity, acknowledging that a large amount of suicide prevention takes place in functions which reduce suicide related risk factors, (such as housing, financial and social support).

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

1. Continue to support the multi-agency priorities and actions outlined in the Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Plan 2022/23 and the Torbay Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26, including:
 - Promoting information and awareness around suicide through all statutory, community and voluntary partnerships in the Bay
 - Promoting suicide awareness and free suicide training with local employers and businesses to support creation of suicide safe environments. This will support actions identified in the Cost of Living Summit 5 October 2022
 - Referral and signposting pathways to appropriate support and services, based on level of need
2. Enable Torbay Council staff and providers who interact with vulnerable residents to identify and act on potential indicators of poor mental wellbeing or suicide risk, and also to maintain their own wellbeing. This is primarily through:
 - Promoting a range of suicide prevention training to all employees (universal and targeted offer based on roles and functions)
 - Partnerships with and signposting to partners providing relevant support e.g., Samaritans, TALKWORKS, QWELL, Devon Wellbeing Hub and the Torbay Community Helpline

3. Focus on specific actions to improve children’s emotional health and wellbeing through new multi-agency forums leading implementation of children’s services priorities (SEND action plan, early help, family hubs)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Plan 2022/23

Background Documents

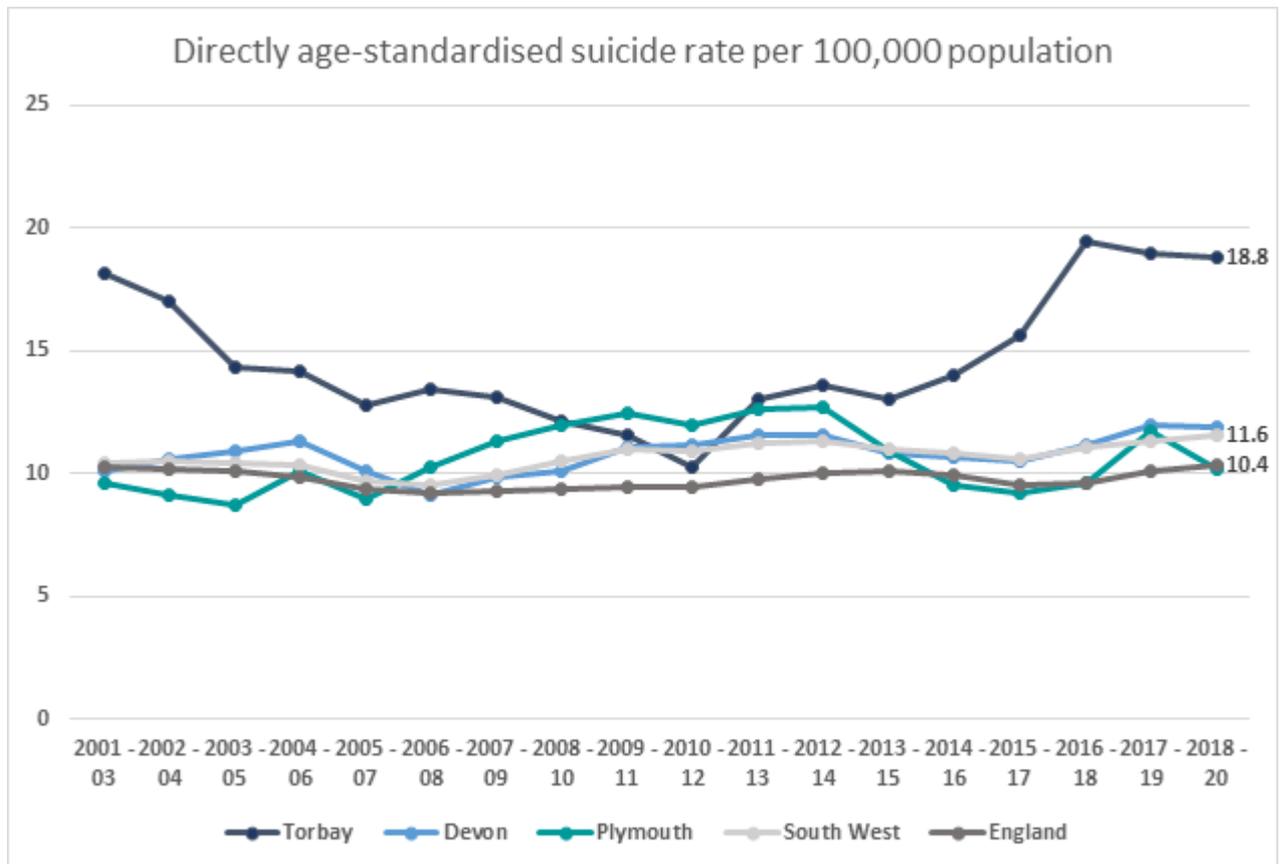
[National suicide prevention strategy](#)

[House of Commons Health Committee suicide prevention report](#)

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Suicide is a major public health issue: it is the leading cause of death in men under 50 years, young people and new mothers. Torbay’s suicide rate, in general, increased year on year 2010 – 2020 (see Figure below) and is one of the highest suicide rates amongst local authorities in England. Local Authorities are recommended to coordinate and implement work on suicide prevention under their local public health and health improvement responsibilities. The main thrust of this is through the development and delivery of a local multi-agency suicide prevention plan. The Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Plan has been endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and demonstrates our multi-agency approach to tackling suicide in 2022-23 (Appendix 1).



Source: OHID Public Health Outcomes Framework

1.2 As well as seeing a stabilisation in suicide rate during the 2021/22 action plan, additional achievements are outlined in the infographic over the page.

1.3 The Torbay priorities for action this year include:

1.3.1 Reduce social isolation and loneliness

1.3.2 Promote a 'culture of curiosity' both publicly and professionally – identifying and responding to unusual behaviours, disengagement, or 'did not attend (DNAs)'

1.3.3 Address system gaps for people with severe mental illness (in partnership with the Community Mental Health Framework redesign)

1.3.4 Support research and data collection – e.g., suicide and self-harm research with people with lived experience

1.3.5 Tackle basic needs first – e.g., working with partners in food banks, children's centres, housing and DWP

1.3.6 Tailor approaches to improving mental health for children and young people – building on the school based self-harm programmes and health needs assessment

What did we achieve last financial year				
	Saw no increase in the suicide rate from the previous year		Saw no inpatient suicides in Devon and Torbay mental health settings	
	Created a resilient and more sustainable mental health offer within the Torbay Community Helpline		Trained 4 local trainers to deliver online and face-to-face Community Suicide Awareness and Emotional Resilience training	
	Supported 139 people with their mental health via the Torbay Community Helpline over a 7-month period. 13 callers had suicidal thoughts or intent.		Saw reductions in self-harming thoughts, frequency and intensity and improved happiness in the <u>majority of</u> young people who engaged with the school based self-harm prevention pilot.	
1.4 The Dev	Awarded £50,000 to 20 local CVSE groups for creative suicide prevention activity		Commissioned qualitative research into self-harm in Torbay from local academics with lived experience.	

1.4 The Dev

1.4.1 Devon-v

1.4.2 Devon-v

1.4.3 Devon & Torbay – Embedding National Confidential Inquiry for Suicide Harms (NCISH) '10 ways to improve patient safety' in acute and community mental health provision

1.4.4 New Devon-wide online mental health and wellbeing support for adults – QWELL [Qwell - Mental Health & Wellbeing Online Service - Wellbeing Info](#)

1.5 For every life lost to suicide, the estimated total cost to the economy is around £1.67 million. For every person who ends their life by suicide, a minimum of six people will suffer a severe impact on their lives due to this bereavement. This means that in 2021, the potential cost to the local economy of suicide was around £35 million and severely impacted upon 126 Torbay residents. Suicide and mental ill health also disproportionately

affect those living in poverty, in deprivation and those who are vulnerable and/or have a learning disability.

2. Options under consideration

2.1 Recommendations are for consideration. No decision is required.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

3.1 National suicide prevention funding has been allocated to all local authorities in Devon 2020 - 2023 and supports implementation of some of the priorities outlined within the action plan.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 None identified.

5. Engagement and Consultation

5.1 Multi-agency members of the Suicide Prevention Plan Sub-Group (of the Torbay Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance) have been involved in the development of this plan. It is a living document steered by group members and will account for emerging issues and new membership as appropriate. This plan has been endorsed by the Torbay Health and Wellbeing Board and will be made publicly available on the Torbay Council website.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

6.1 Not applicable.

7. Tackling Climate Change

7.1 No relevant issues identified.

8. Associated Risks

8.1 Risks from non-implementation are loss of opportunity to work across partnerships to reduce rates of suicide, self-harm and mental distress in the population.

9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

9.1 Not required for this report.

10. Cumulative Council Impact

- 10.1 Activities within the Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Plan and specific recommendations may reduce suicide, self-harm and mental distress for employees and residents.

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

- 11.1 Activities within the Torbay Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Plan and specific recommendations may reduce suicide, self-harm and mental distress for the community.